

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1-23. (Canceled)

24. (New) External door handle, especially for motor vehicles, comprising:

- a stationary bracket (10) attached to the door (11);
- a grip (20), supported pivotably on the bracket (10);
- a lock mounted in the door (11), which lock can be switched between a locked and an unlocked position;

- wherein an actuation (24) of the grip (20) to open the door (11) is nonfunctional in the locked position but functional in the unlocked position; and

- at least one capacitive electronic sensor circuit (28, 38), which is mounted on the bracket (10) and on an outer electrode that is active in the outside area of the external door handle;

wherein an active surface (37) of the outer electrode senses the approach of or contact by an authorized person and is therefore called the sensor surface (37); and

wherein the authorized person carries with him an active or passive means of identification for access authorization and/or driving authorization for the vehicle;

wherein in an inner area of the external door handle at least first and second further inner electrodes are connected to the capacitive electronic sensor circuit (28, 38);

wherein the sensor surfaces (37, 67; 47, 57) operable in the outside area are arranged on the pivotable grip (20) and/or on a cover part (25) of the external door handle;

wherein active surfaces designated as transfer surfaces (36, 56; 46) of the second inner electrode are provided on the grip (20) and/or the cover part (25), and are electrically connected (34, 60; 49) to the sensor surfaces (37, 67; 47, 57) operable in the outside area;

wherein the two inner electrodes serve to transfer an inner coupling field (50.1 to 50.4);

wherein the active surfaces (35, 59; 45, 55) of the first inner electrode (35, 59; 45, 55) build up the coupling field (50.1 to 50.4), and are called exciter surfaces of the first inner electrode;

wherein the exciter surfaces (35, 59; 45, 55) of the first inner electrode are arranged on the bracket (10) at a free gap (39) to the transfer surfaces (36, 56; 46) of the second inner electrode, which first inner electrode is connected to the electronic sensor circuit (28, 38) and relative to the transfer surfaces (36, 56; 46) of the second inner electrode at least in the rest position builds the electrical coupling field (50.1 to 50.4);

wherein the coupling field (50.1 to 50.4) functions in the inner area of the external door handle; and

in the outer area of the external door handle, the approach or contact detected by the sensor surfaces (37, 67; 47, 57) is conducted to the electronic sensor circuit (28, 38) in the bracket (10) by via the transfer surfaces (35, 56; 46) of the second inner electrode and the exciter surfaces (35, 59; 45, 55) of the first inner electrode.

25. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein the grip (20) is constructed as a pull-type grip that is pivotably supported (15) at one end (21) on the bracket (10), wherein the transfer surfaces (36, 56) of the second inner electrode are arranged on an opposite free end (22) of the grip.

26. (New) External door handle according to claim 25, wherein the grip end (22) has an arm (32) that cooperates with the lock upon actuation (24) of the pull-grip (20), wherein the movable transfer surfaces (36, 56) of the second inner electrode are at an inner end of the arm (23), and wherein, the transfer surfaces (35, 56) of the second inner electrode and the electrical connection (34, 60) to the sensor surface (37, 67) are integrated in the arm (23).

27. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein a layer (52) of electrically conductive paint is applied to the exterior surfaces (53) and/or to the interior surfaces of the external door handle, at least in certain defined areas, and in this paint layer (52) produces the sensor surfaces (57).

28. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein an electrically conductive layer of elastic material is applied to the exterior surfaces and/or to the interior surfaces of the external door handle, at least in certain defined areas, and this layer produces the sensor surfaces (57).

29. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein the external door handle has several separate, outward-

acting sensor surfaces (67, 47) for sensing the presence of a human hand and/or inward-acting transfer surfaces (56, 46) and exciter surfaces (59, 45) for building up the coupling field, and in that these separate sensor surfaces (67, 47), upon contact by or approach of the authorized person, trigger different functions in the lock and/or in the vehicle.

30. (New) External door handle according to claim 29, wherein one of the sensor surfaces (67) serves to unlock the lock, whereas another (47) serves to lock the lock.

31. (New) External door handle according to claim 29, wherein, upon the approach of or contact by the authorized person, at least one of the sensor surfaces triggers the movement of movable parts in the vehicle in the opening and/or in the closing direction.

32. (New) External door handle according to claim 31, wherein the sensor surfaces cause the movable parts to move in the opening direction upon contact by or approach of the authorized person and then in the closing direction upon the next approach or contact.

33. (New) External door handle according to claim 31, wherein the movable parts are one or more windows, a sliding roof, a rear hatch, and/or one or more doors of the vehicle.

34. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein the electronic sensor circuits (28, 38) are located in a housing unit (30), which is seated on the bracket (11).

35. (New) External door handle according to claim 34, wherein the housing unit (30) is prefabricated and can be attached to the inward-facing (26) of the bracket (11).

36. (New) External door handle according to claim 34, wherein the housing unit (30) is prefabricated and is attached in the area of a barrel (17) mounted on the bracket, where the barrel (17) is mounted in the bracket (11) next to the grip (20).

37. (New) External door handle according to claim 34, wherein the housing unit (30) consists of a main housing (31) and a projecting housing finger (32); and the end (33) of the finger (32) extends into the outer area (25) of the external door handle, where it has an outward-acting sensor surface (27) for triggering the locking of the lock.

38. (New) External door handle according to claim 37, wherein the electronic sensor circuit (28, 38) is integrated into the main housing (31) of the housing unit (30), whereas the housing finger (32) can be inserted through an opening (29) in the bracket (11) and through a hole in the outer housing skin (13) of the door.

39. (New) External door handle according to claim 38, wherein the finger (32) follows a profile course of the arm (23) when the grip (20) is in a rest position.

40. (New) External door handle according to claim 37, wherein the exciter surface (35) of the first inner electrode is located in the housing unit (30), in particular in the finger (32).

41. (New) External door handle according to claim 24, wherein the sensor surfaces (37, 67) acting in the outside area, the transfer surfaces (36, 46, 56) that transfer the coupling field, and the electrical conductors (34, 49, 60) that connect them to each other are all constructed as a single part.